

COMMON SENSE IS NEEDED IN HIRING TRUCKS THESE DAYS

Cheapest Rate Per Day Is Not Always the Most Economical as Experience Has Often Demonstrated.

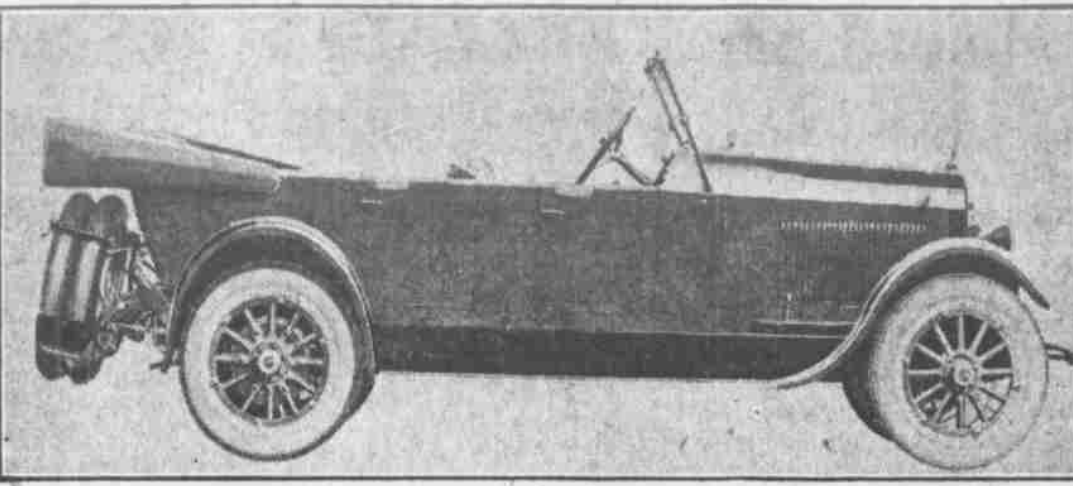
This is the day of the jitney truckman. Many business houses rent motor transportation service of trucking contractors instead of owning them, to escape the care of truck operation and maintenance and because the idea has gained footing that trucks cannot be operated economically except in large fleets. As a result a type of enterprise known as jitney trucking has been given birth, composed for the most part of ex-taximeters and chauffeurs who, thanks to liberal credit extended by truck dealers, are able to do a transportation business on a shoestring.

There are scores of cases on record where a jitney truckman, starting with a few hundred dollars saved or borrowed from friends, has been able to build up a business employing from five to a score of trucks, has paid for his vehicles, earned the goodwill of his patrons and established an independent business by which he derives a comfortable income. This is the sort of individualistic enterprise in which true Americans take pride. Many others, impressed by the success which a few of the pioneers were able to achieve, failed in the attempt to do the same thing. Today in all the principal cities of the country there are scores of jitney truckmen with their vehicles partly paid for who are waging a warfare of ruthless price cutting. Daily salaried motor trucks are meeting with rebuffs from substantial business houses, who refuse to consider the purchase of trucks as long as they are able to rent trucks for less than they can operate them themselves.

Blame Ignorance.

Most of these men know that the low rates at which they are able to rent trucks are due to the ignorance of their operators. This ignorance is chiefly ignorance of costs. One of the fundamental errors which jitney truck operators make is in purchasing inferior equipment and assuming that it can be operated for as little as the high-grade and usually high-priced trucks which are found in the fleets of successful trucking contractors. Your jitney truck operator keeps his accounts by check-stub and notes scrawled on the backs of old envelopes. At the start he is told by an unscrupulous salesman what his operating costs should be. These estimates usually consider gasoline, oil, tires and drivers' wages. To this the operator adds the amount of payments he must make on his notes and the cost of parking the vehicles. He totals this and arrives at a cost of \$10 or \$12 a day for a 3-ton truck. He then gets

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the prices which other operators are charging and fixes his figure accordingly, usually being willing to slightly underbid his competitors. His price may be \$16 a day. At this he figures \$6 a day profit on each truck. Successful operators know that if they are to continue in business any length of time they must charge depreciation. The depreciation rate will vary with the quality of truck, from a maximum of 50,000 miles for a low priced truck to 100,000 miles for the highest class of vehicle. They know that the interest on the investment must be charged as an operating cost. They know that a premium is part of the cost of running the truck. They recognize their own efforts as worth money and a legitimate charge against the truck. In other words they realize that overhead is a big charge, and that idle time is expensive time. Consequently their rates are higher than their unsophisticated brethren.

Operator Suffers.

When competition becomes keen it is the well-informed operator who is the first sufferer. He knows that his irresponsible competitors are losing money every mile their trucks operate. He knows that it is only a question of time before they will be forced to give up the business because their trucks will have been worn out and no sinking fund will be available to repair or replace them. He dare not cut his own prices and yet he has the greatest difficulty in competition. To the average business house rent-

ing truck service these facts are either unknown or ignored. The average man renting trucks rents for the lowest figure for which he can secure service. Many of them after using jitney service for years are contented. Ask them how many miles the trucks run, what the average load amounts to or how many hours are wasted daily en route and they express surprise. They know that every once in a while one of the regular trucks gives trouble during the day and is replaced for a space by another. To suggest to such as these that it would be good business to rent their vehicles of the more responsible trucking concerns, paying a higher fee, or that they buy their own fleet and hire a good man to manage deliveries, is to occasion their scorn. Yet there are thoughtful concerns who are convinced that this is the wise course. Looking forward, they see the time when the jitney operator will be forced to withdraw, to be replaced by another one, perhaps as green as the last, with attendant disorder. They see their delivery trucks being overtaken in rough-looking trucks bearing the name of a transportation company and visually the value of a well-painted, clean truck bearing their own name in attractive style. They foresee a possible withdrawal of a number of jitney operators at once and a stringency of transportation and exorbitant prices resulting. The risk of losing a valuable load of goods by fire or theft, unprotected by adequate insurance or surety bonds, looms large as the price of cheap truck hire.

Analyze Work.

Many of them have investigated, looking deeper than the price of a truck per day. They have analyzed the amount of work, expressed in ton-miles, which hired trucks are doing, and have compared this with the amount which could be done by a well-managed fleet under the watchful eye of their own manager. These studies have brought startling results at times, showing that half the number of trucks, in many instances, are really needed. They have found hired trucks deliberately loafing; they have found them doing other jobs on time they have paid for. They have even found the drivers of hired trucks responsible for loss of trade by insolence to their customers.

In the building trade the lowest bidder by no means always gets the job, and it is only a question of time until buyers of truck service will also look beyond the immediate dollar. Though sentiment has no place in business, it is doubtful if so many firms would willingly encourage the ruinous practices of jitney truckmen if they realized that they were inducing deserving men, as most of them are, to commit business suicide through ignorance; that they were embarrassing a great and vital industry, the motor truck industry; and that they were making it impossible for many legitimate trucking concerns to continue business. Dog eat dog is a poor business principle.

LIGHTING PLANT BOON TO FARMER

Irrisome Toil Minimized by Modern Home Equipment.

The farmer's wife, after generations of tedious toil, is coming into her own. With the universal adoption of the automobile and the more recent perfection of individual electric lighting and power plants, her home life has undergone an epochal change.

The toll and monotony which attached itself to woman's place in rural life, long has been proverbial. Removed from the city the country woman for the most part was without the scope of those many advantages which during the last century have come through invention and development.

While engineering science was developing the reaper and binder, the gasoline engine, the tractor, the truck and other machinery to aid the farmer in increasing the acreage and production of his land, it did nothing of vital importance to relieve the weariness of the farmer's wife. She still was forced to adhere to methods which came into vogue in the time of her grandmother. For the most part she churned by hand, washed by hand, swept by hand and sewed by uncertain light. The result was that she grew old before her time and enjoyed none of the pleasures to which she rightfully was entitled. No development of the era has done quite so much to better her condition as the modern electric lighting and power plants. With the perfection of these a decided change has been wrought in her daily life. Where once she bent over a horse wheel she has discarded for one operated by an electric motor. The hand churning has been replaced by a vacuum cleaner. The smoking oil lamp has been replaced by an electric light. The sewing machine and milk separator are now equipped with motors. The ironing is done by electricity to aid the modern sanitary plumbing and running water in the house—improvements which may be traced directly to the new plants which furnish the necessary power for pumping.

For the first time the women folk of the farm are living like their city cousins. The recent announcement and demonstration of a new electric lighting and power plant, known as Willys Light, by the Electric Auto-Lite corporation, of Toledo, has attracted the attention of the potential value of these modern home electric systems to the attention of the farmer. Through an extensive distributor and dealer organization and by means of a concerted campaign of publicity, the Willys Light division of the Auto-Lite corporation is furthering the universal adoption of electric light and power in the rural districts.

The Willys Light plant is said to have been particularly designed for rural homes. The compactness and simplicity of its design, together with the simplicity, quietness and economy of its operation, made possible by the Willys Knight sleeve-valve engine, are described as among the outstanding, exclusive features which make this plant especially adapted to the farm home.

DATES ANNOUNCED FOR NATIONAL AUTO SHOWS

At the annual meeting of the National Automobile Chamber of Commerce the manufacturers decided to hold their national shows in New York, Jan. 3 to 10, and in Chicago, Jan. 24 to 31, for both passenger cars and motor trucks. Space will be allotted, it was agreed, on the basis of cars or trucks sold during the year ended June 30, 1917, because of the war work so generally taken on by the industry during the last year.

\$8,000,000 IN CARS STOLEN LAST YEAR

"More than \$8,000,000 worth of automobiles were stolen in this country last year," declares the local sales manager of the I. J. Cooper Rubber Company, Racine, Wis., and accessory distributors. "But few of these cars are recovered. Theft of automobiles is made altogether too easy through the carelessness of some motorists. The man who protects his house and personal belongings is often apt to forget this matter when it comes to a motor car. Whenever a machine is parked for any length of time, the motorist should see that he is protecting his machine in some way against crooks and joy riders. Not only should the car be protected, but the equipment as well. Many extra tires are stolen which could be saved through using a lock and chain."

Police and insurance companies have watched with deep concern the growing number of automobiles stolen, and are convinced that only a federal law will deal with the problem. There is now a measure before congress, which, if finally written on the statute books, will go far toward stopping the growing industry of stealing automobiles. This bill provides that a bureau be established in the department of justice to act as a central bureau of license registration of all automobile licenses issued by states, to receive reports from police departments and citizens about automobiles and to supply information to the state governments and police departments about licensees and thefts.

YORK ON TOUR IN DODGE BROS. AUTO

Sergt. Alvin C. York, "the greatest hero of them all," who captured almost an entire company of Germans single-handed, has undertaken a lecture tour. For the present, however, it will be confined to that section of Tennessee in which he was quite well known even before the war as an elder of the church. His purpose is to raise enough money to build and equip a modern schoolhouse for the children of Fentress county. He will make his lecture tour by automobile, having bought a Dodge Brothers touring car of the Cumberland Motor company, in Nashville, Tenn. York had ample opportunity to observe the terrific conditions under which motor cars operated during the war in France, and it was this observation that influenced him in his choice of a car. Fentress county is even more badly neglected in roads than in schools, he says, and it will require a car like those that passed the test in France to carry him through.

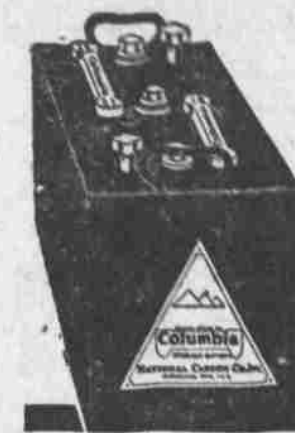
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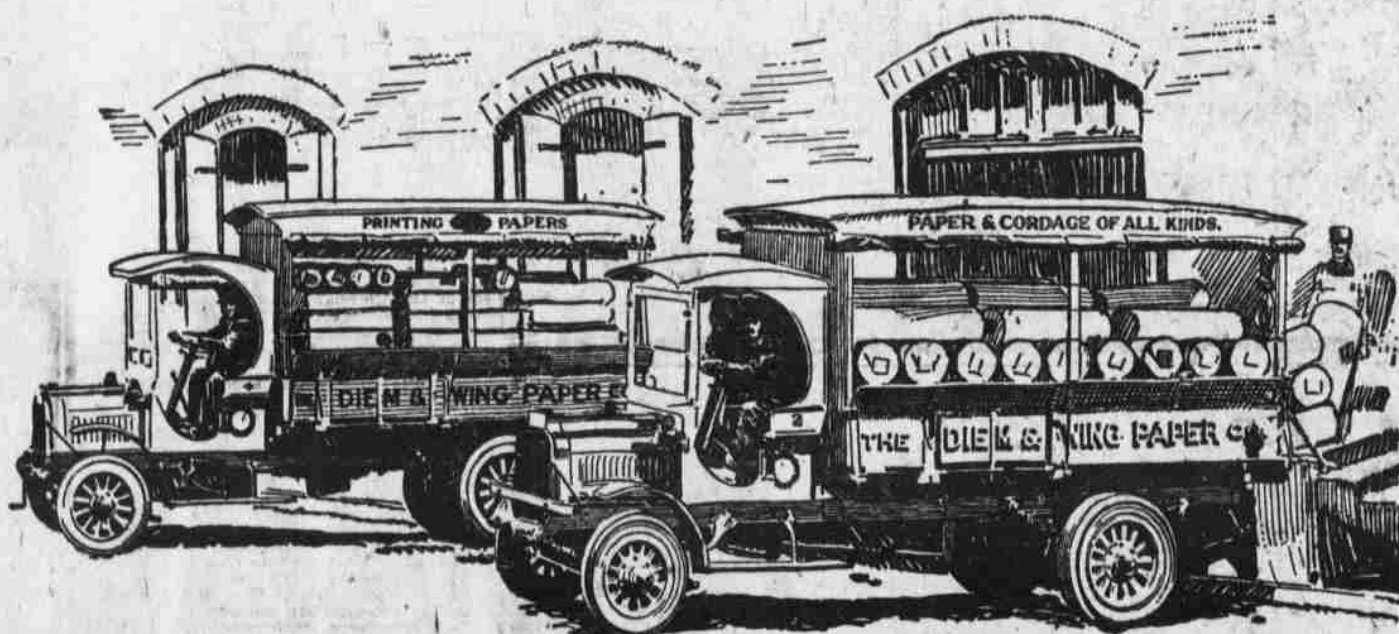


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The "Floating Power Plant" saves gas and oil because it keeps the motor running smoothly regardless of the condition of the roads or streets.

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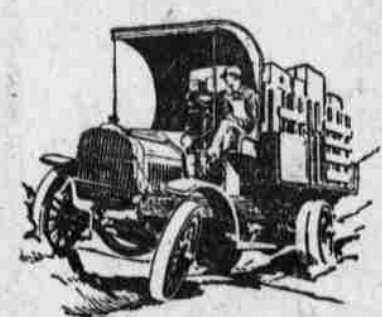
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THE UNITED STATES MOTOR TRUCK CO., Cincinnati, Ohio

The "Floating Power Plant" Test



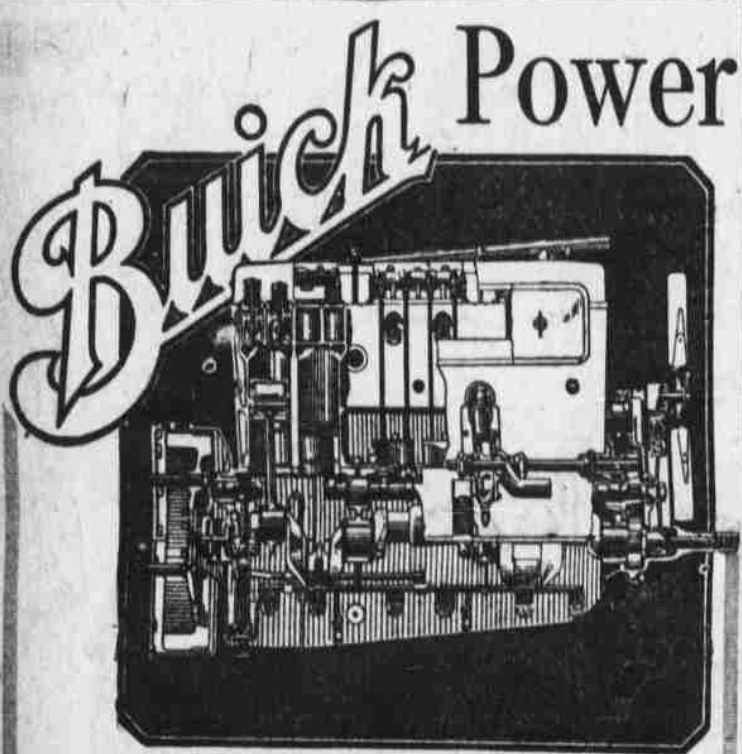
Here's a test. Take a United States Truck and drive it into a rough place in the road or country. Stop the truck where the frame will get the hardest twist. Stop the engine. Now, "Crank Her." The engine will turn over as sweetly as if the truck stood on level ground. That's because of the unusual flexible suspension. Spiral coiled springs and a ball-and-socket joint keep motor level and prevent pistons from binding in cylinders. Just try it—that's all. You'll find something new—something worth buying.

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